

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, D.C. 20515

January 12, 2021

The Honorable Christopher C. Miller  
Acting Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1000 Defense, Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Acting Secretary Miller:

We write to you today with grave concerns regarding the Department of Defense's role in preparing for and responding to the January 6, 2021 attack on the United States Capitol. The unprecedented siege raises serious concerns and questions that must be fully addressed to mitigate any future potential threats and ensure the security of this nation and the safety of federal facilities, elected officials, and the American people.

First, we are concerned that the Department of Defense failed to adequately prepare for the security environment leading up to the January 6 rally. On January 4, Newsweek reported that "while federal law enforcement agencies prepare for the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden in two weeks, they see this coming week as far more dangerous." In response to the Mayor's request, the Pentagon directly limited the use of riot gear, sharing equipment with local law enforcement, and any interaction with protestors, except for self-defense. Furthermore, the District of Columbia National Guard was told that a quick-reaction force would be allowed to deploy as a measure of last resort.

Additionally, we have grave concerns regarding the Department of Defense's failure to recognize the gravity of the insurrection at the Capitol and to provide a proportional and timely response. Multiple press outlets have reported delays and denials of requests to deploy the National Guard to the District of Columbia from around the region. District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser has stated that she "made it perfectly clear that they needed extraordinary help, including the National Guard." The District of Columbia Council has stated that "the Department of Defense denied a request by Mayor Muriel Bowser to expand the responsibilities of the District of Columbia National Guard so that they would be authorized to protect and restore order at the Capitol Building." Maryland Governor Larry Hogan has said that he "was ready, willing and able to immediately deploy [National Guard] to the Capitol, however we were repeatedly denied approval to do so" and that approval to deploy the Maryland National Guard only came after a delay of "90 minutes." Furthermore, there have been conflicting reports on the role of President Trump and Vice President Pence in approving the deployment of the National Guard to the Capitol.

It is clear that there are significant issues with the structure and the command and control of the District of Columbia National Guard that must be addressed. Unlike the 50 states of our country,

the District of Columbia is reliant on the federal government to approve authorization and deployment of the Guard, adding a layer of bureaucracy that limits the responsiveness to national security threats in our capital. These additional steps for approval, and the lack of a direct reporting structure to the jurisdiction of responsibility, appear to have contributed to the massive security failure on January 6.

As such, we are requesting a full accounting of the planning, coordination, and response that resulted in insurrectionists breaching the United States Capitol. Specifically, we request the following:

1. Copies of assessments the Department received of the security environment and contingency plans.
2. In preparing for the security environment in the days ahead of January 6, why the Department discounted credible threats on social media of demonstrators “storming the Capitol” and if the Department considered the possibility of rioters breaching the U.S. Capitol grounds.
3. The basis and rationale on which the Department relied in determining the equipment, tactics, techniques, and procedures that the National Guard could use to respond to an escalation of the protest.
4. For each request by or response (interim or final) to Mayor Bowser for deployment of the District of Columbia National Guard to the U.S. Capitol, provide the time of the request, the support requested, whether the request was approved or denied, and who made that determination.
5. For each request by or response (interim or final) to Gov. Hogan for deployment of the Maryland National Guard to the U.S. Capitol, provide the time of the request, the support requested, whether the request approved or denied, and who made the determination.
6. For each request by or response (interim or final) to Gov. Northam for deployment of the Virginia National Guard to the U.S. Capitol, provide the time of the request, the support requested, whether the request approved or denied, and who made the determination.
7. If any other requests that were received for deployment of the National Guard to the U.S. Capitol either prior to or on January 6, provide the time of the request, the support requested, whether the request was approved or denied, and who made the determination.
8. An accounting of each unit of the National Guard deployed to the Capitol, their size, when they arrived, and how they were equipped.
9. The size and location of the Quick Reaction Force (QRF) on January 6, 2021; the operational chain of command of the QRF; the conditions under which the QRF could be activated; and the rules of engagement under which the QRF operated.
10. How was the quick-reaction force employed on January 6? When was the decision made for their insertion and who made that decision?
11. The role and actions of President Donald Trump in the approval or denial of each request.
12. The role and actions of Vice President Michael Pence in the approval or denial of each request.
13. The role and actions of Acting Secretary of Defense Miller in the approval or denial of each request.
14. The role and actions of Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy in the approval or denial of each request.

15. What corrective actions the Department is taking to ensure that the National Guard from the District of Columbia and other states in the region are able to plan, coordinate, and execute command and control in response to threats to the National Capital Region.

We thank you for your commitment to the security of our nation and the people of this great country. Your response to the breach on the Capitol assisted in restoring control of the building and the execution of our Constitutional duty to certify the results of the election. We look forward to continuing to work with you to strengthen the defense of our nation's capital and to ensuring that such an event does not occur in the future.

Sincerely,



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Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress

Colin Allred  
Member of Congress

Jake Auchincloss  
Member of Congress

André Carson  
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress

Jim Cooper  
Member of Congress

Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress

Suzan Delbene  
Member of Congress

Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress

Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress

James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress

Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress

Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress

Andy Kim  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress

Grace Meng  
Member of Congress

Kweisi Mfume  
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Grace F. Napolitano  
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Chellie Pingree  
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Kathleen M. Rice  
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Lisa Blunt Rochester.  
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Linda T. Sanchez  
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Mary Gay Scanlon  
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Terri A. Sewell  
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Darren Soto  
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Jackie Speier  
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Marilyn Strickland  
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Thomas Suozzi  
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Nydia M. Velázquez  
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